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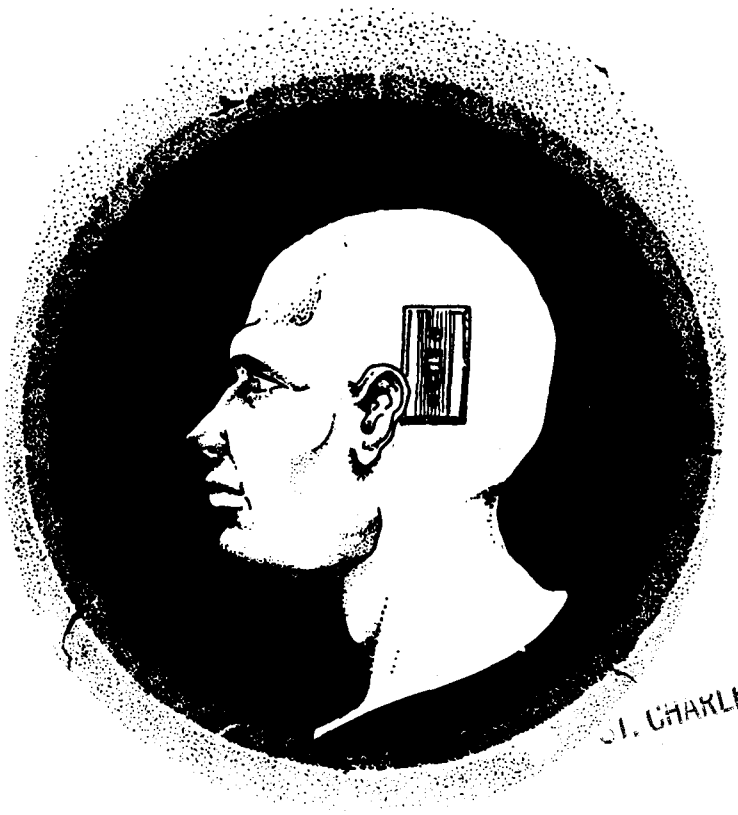

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NEWS & VIEWS

Philippine Drama

Emerging as one of the main sources of opposition to the dictatorial regime of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos is, surprisingly enough, elements of the Catholic clergy.

And especially outspoken is the Prelate Ordinary of Malaybalay, Jesuit Bishop Francisco F. Claver.

Currently making the rounds in the Philippine underground press (the regular press is strictly censored) are letters from Claver to the president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and to Marcos himself.

Co-signed by 27 priests, the letters lay the facts on the line: basic rights are vitiated, and the referendum of last winter (which ostensibly conveyed legitimacy to Marcos' new rule) was a "farce."

The misgivings of Claver and the 27 clergymen are spelled out in the letter to the episcopal conference head, Archbishop T. V. Alberto. The letter could hardly be more blunt. It tells of the ejection of tenant farmers from their land; men "killed in jail even before their guilt could be investigated and established"; land-grabbing, and the complicity of the military in crimes against the people.

"These are not unfounded (and therefore libelous) allegations," Bishop Claver's letter states. "We have documentary proof for many of these transgressions and are ready to present them on request to competent authorities. They are documents sworn to by fearful people at great risk to themselves and their families."

The Claver letter is particularly direct with respect to the referendum: "Everybody knows, our 'simple' barrio folk especially, that there was pressure, intimidation, physical coercion even, to vote according to 'suggested' answers. The referendum, to call a spade a spade, was a farce and cannot be made the basis for concluding to the legitimacy, at least from the moral point of view, of the government authority of the President of the Republic."

Claver's letter concludes with an expression of trust that Archbishop Alberto "will be able to convey these thoughts to the President." By way of insuring that the thoughts did get to the top, Claver sent a copy of the letter to Marcos, together with a covering note explaining his and the co-signers' motives:

"We have written from a genuine concern for the good of the people, of the little people especially who cannot raise their voices except through ours . . . If our speaking out is deemed subversion and rebellion, and, on the part of my foreign priests, unacceptable political meddling, so be it. We have heard these accusations often enough before, and we are ready to bear the consequences of our act."

The stage, thus, is set for something of a show-down.

The Nixon Hallmark

The duplicities of the Nixon Administration are dying hard, Watergate and all the pious public pledges notwithstanding.

Among the latest efforts at misleading: Secretary of State Rogers' memorandum to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee explaining the Constitutional authority under which the Administration continued to wage war in Indochina.

In that memorandum, Rogers cited *Mitchell v. Laird* and proceeded to say: "In the words of Judge Wyzanski, the President properly acted 'with a profound concern for the durable interests of the nation—its defense, its honor, its morality.' "

The duplicity was speared several days later by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Judge Wyzanski had said no such thing.

What Wyzanski said, Schlesinger noted in a letter to the *New York Times*, was this:

"President Nixon's duty did not go beyond trying to bring the war to an end as promptly as was consistent with the safety of those fighting and with a profound concern for the durable interests of the nation—its defense, its honor, its morality. Whether President Nixon did so proceed is a question which at this stage in history a court is incompetent to answer."

In other words, what Judge Wyzanski described was the President's obligation, not his performance.

Schlesinger characterized the incident as "one more example of the instinct for duplicity and mendacity that, as recent events have made more clear than ever, is the hallmark of the Nixon style of government."

Vadillo, *Siempre*, Mexico

God's Green Isle

Ecumenism in Ireland continues to proceed at a small-step-forward, giant-step-backwards pace. The latest step backwards: the failure of the Irish Catholic hierarchy to respond affirmatively to an invitation to name official observers to the Church of Ireland (Anglican) Synod.

William Cardinal Conway of Armagh said the invitation could not be accepted since it would first have to be referred to the Catholic Episcopal Conference, and that body was not meeting until several weeks hence.

Progressive Irish theologians scored the decision, remarking that the case "highlights the lack of effective ecumenical structures in the Catholic church in Ireland."

The *Irish Times*, prestigious Dublin daily, added solemnly: "Once again, organization appears to smother inspiration."

Odds and Ends

—Acronym of the Month Award, to the Minnesota organization fighting sex education in Catholic schools: Restore the Orthodox Message in Education (ROME).

—Those individual exemptions allowable under Phase II guidelines suited some executives fine. According to *Business Week*, Olin Corporation's James F. Towey's pay for 1973 was $321,718, an increase of 212.3 percent over 1971. Similarly, Henry Ford II's salary for '72 was $887,-672, a 27.4 percent increase. The Phase II ceiling was set at 5.5 percent.

—Where does the U.S. stand with respect to the net flow of official development assistance to less-developed countries and multilateral agencies? Twelfth . . . behind Portugal, France, The Netherlands, Australia, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Norway. The U.S. contribution is 0.32 percent of its GNP. Source for the figures: U.S. Department of State.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Sampson's 'Truth'

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: "The truth is very simple," wrote Ronald Sampson in his review of Rollo May's *Power and Innocence* [Feb. 9]. "Men have no right under any circumstances to kill or do violence or coerce others, and must suffer an evil will rather than themselves fall into sin."

This sort of moral fundamentalism is perhaps striking, especially in a world where most of us have come to feel that the truth is seldom simple —and can hardly get through a week with our children without exercising *some* kind of coercion, slight as it may be.

But since Ronald Sampson was totally unable to reply to the objection raised by P. David Finks ["An Exchange of Views," May 11]—except by distortion (linking Mr. Finks to American policy in Vietnam), exaggeration (a picture of supposed fruitlessness of union power in England which is ludicrous in any historical perspective), bald assertion, and a final dollop of religious rhetoric ("the Truth we know in our hearts")—I must conclude his position is without intellectual merit.

Two other characteristics of Mr. Sampson's "reply" are also somehow revealing. The first is simply that it is no less than eleven column-inches longer than the letter which it answers. The second is that a curiously violent undertone pervades not only the reply but the original review as well. To be of another mind than Mr. Sampson is apparently to be numbered among the "enemies [who] . . . strive with all their power . . . to confuse us." So it goes with those who so doctrinairely know that "the truth is very simple."

On second thought, it is reassuring to know that Mr. Sampson is personally opposed to all forms of coercion.

PETER STEINFELS

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A TIME FOR REVIEW

With so many lofty institutions of the system tarnished by Watergate, and with the scandal showing no signs of having run its course, it is perhaps premature to single out any one institution and say that it has escaped blemish. Yet, so far as issues raised by Watergate are concerned, one institution has thus far covered itself with honor, and it is the institution over which there has been so much fretting as the Nixon appointments to it have increased: the Federal Judiciary System. Even the Nixon-packed Supreme Court is not without a measure of merit for last year striking down the Administration's claim to an unqualified right to bug any person or group it suspected of threatening whatever the government deemed to be the national security (*U.S. v. U.S. District Court*). On reflection, that ruling gives the current High Court more credibility points than almost anything else it has ruled upon.

But the larger credit, in terms of issues accented by Watergate, belongs to the Federal District Courts. In three notable instances—the Harrisburg case of last year, the Ellsberg-Russo trial, and now the case of the "Camden 28"—the District Courts have demonstrated that the system is not corrupted utterly, however much the mess in Washington may make it appear so. In Harrisburg, the bench was rescued by the jury, but in both the Ellsberg-Russo and Camden trials it was the presiding judge who was instrumental in the working out of justice for the defendants—Judge Matthew Byrne, Jr., of the Ellsberg-Russo case by his decisive dismissal of the government's charges; Judge Clarkson Fisher of the Camden case by a courageous instruction to the jury stressing that "overreaching" propriety in the use of an *agent provocateur* constituted ground for acquittal.

It can be said, of course, that the Federal District Courts have only been made to look good by the essential stupidity and lawlessness of the government, and by prosecution activities that reduced the outcomes of the trials virtually to foregone conclusions. Yet, when one considers the pressures that must have been brought to bear in each of these trials by a government anxious to promote its own ulterior motives, the performances of the Courts are not to be discounted. The White House's dangling of the FBI directorship before Judge Byrne during the Ellsberg-Russo proceed-

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ings gives some idea of the pressures that must have been exerted. That action may even constitute criminal tampering.

There is, however, a sobering side to the exultation accompanying these District Court decisions, for they make one wonder how many people may today be behind bars because in their cases the government got away with tactics for which it was speared in the Harrisburg, Ellsberg-Russo and Camden cases. Perhaps there are none. But until there is some larger assurance in this regard than the benign assumptions of the past that the government plays by the law, then conclusions of there being none are unwarranted. This may be an appropriate time, therefore, to undertake a review of a variety of government-prosecuted cases, including cases where the individuals may already have served the terms of their convictions. Just as no one belongs behind bars who was put there by the "creative activity" of the government, so does no one deserve to carry as part of his or her record a conviction resulting from some intolerable government dirty trick.

Summer Schedule

In keeping with the usual practice, *Commonweal* will again appear on alternate weeks during the summer months. Forthcoming issues will be dated June 15, June 29, July 13, July 27, August 10, August 24, September 7 and September 21. From then on we will resume our normal weekly publishing schedule.

FARAH AND THE BISHOP

SUPPORTING THE PANTS STRIKE

The only element lacking in the labor-organizing efforts of 2,000 striking Mexican-American factory workers, now in their thirteenth month of walkout in El Paso, Texas, against the international clothing complex of Farah Manufacturing Company, is the charisma of a Cesar Chavez.

The causes of the minority Chicano, the poor, women's rights, and social justice, in this struggle against a $160 million pants manufacturer employing 9,000, have drawn attention and support from the ranks of Congress and unionized urban centers throughout the country. The national boycott against the company has resulted in a $10 million decline in sales in 1972.

The closest thing to charisma in the struggle, however, has come not from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the national organizing union which has financed the strikers this far with millions of dollars, but from the Catholic Bishop of El Paso, Sidney M. Metzger. Bishop Metzger, 71-year-old native Texan and Bishop of El Paso for the last 32 years, has provided a behind-the-scenes spiritual leadership which has carried the cause of the "Border" worker into national prominence. His lengthy and documented letter of October 10, explaining working conditions and supporting the national boycott of Farah, has been published in such papers as the *New York Times,* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer,* as well as in Catholic and union periodicals throughout the country. The letter was in response to Bishop Hogan of Rochester, who was not satisfied by Farah representatives' explanations, and who has recently issued his own endorsement of the national boycott.

On May 1 at the regional meeting of the southwestern bishops at Mesilla Park, N. M., Bishop Metzger was cited in a special testimonial dinner presentation by the AFL-CIO. for his support of labor over the years. He recently was featured in the March 26 issue of *Time,* as "The Bishop versus Farah," did an interview in February with Harry Reasoner for TV, spoke to Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union representatives in Chicago and to the assembled bishops of the western regions of United States in Denver, Colorado. And most recent developments from the National Labor Relations Board have backed up his position. In a March 29 judgment, the Board ordered Farah to reinstate with back pay 20 employees who were fired for union-organizing activities going back to 1969. The Company also was ordered to desist from harassing and pressuring employees promoting unionization. Another added support came recently from the Bishop of Schenectady, who released Father Donald Bauer to work with the Union for 6 months, traveling throughout the country to promote boycott support.

Bishop Metzger was approached last summer by groups of El Paso strikers who had originally walked out, 800 strong, on May 9, in sympathy with San Antonio workers who had been fired for promoting the union. The Bishop began his own investigation. Finally, after the national boycott had begun in July with support from Senators Gaylord Nelson and Edward Kennedy, and after the *New York Times* gave national attention to the strike in a story by Homer Bigart, the Bishop issued his October 10 letter.

On October 31 Bishop Metzger addressed the strikers at their weekly rally and assured them that "certainly I do not know how to sew pants, but when it comes to a question of social justice, and when I give you my sup-

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port and blessing to continue your efforts, be assured that I do know what I am doing." Subsequently the Bishop met privately with Farah officials trying to assist a settlement. Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers has also met with the Bishop twice to discuss the workers' cause. On February 20, at the Austin general assembly session of the Texas Conference of Churches, which represents the major Christian denominations of the state including the 11 Catholic dioceses, Bishop Metzger inspired a controversial vote of support for the boycott.

The Farah strike, while representing the cause of the underdog in other parts of the country, has inspired little local sympathy in this border city of 350,000 people, 56 percent of whom are Mexican-Americans and largely Catholic. In an area where border labor is so cheap that almost every middle-income family can afford a maid (6 days for $15), Farah stands as an enlightened, economic pillar of the community. The Chamber of Commerce, business leaders and the average working man, Anglo- or Mexican-American, accept the Texas non-union situation as it is—an open-shop, anti-union state and community.

If the usual urban-American working conditions and pay-scale came with a successful strike, the whole "border economy," which is so depressed and exploitive of Mexican labor, would be shaken to the roots with the creation of a highly competitive labor market. Employers hate to think of this. If this largest local industry should unionize, where would unionization stop, and where would they get cheap labor? Meanwhile, the "happies" of Farah continue at their daily sewing undisturbed, not daring to challenge the little security they possess in their starting $1.70 per hour. They are afraid to support the strike for very personal economic reasons.

The real issue of the strike, however, is not money but the right of workers to organize, as opposed to the *patron* system which company president Willie Farah, through a tight family-run operation, favors. He judges that he knows best what his workers may wish in benefits, wages and working conditions. Thus far, any approach to negotiations has failed, and the idea of a free election under National Labor Relations Board supervision has been rejected. Stock—from a high of $49—is now down to $11 as the boycott continues. Farah seems ready to hold out forever rather than concede free elections and collective bargaining with the rights of representation, recourse and job security. These are the issues of dignity which, in Bishop Metzger's view, far outweigh the money question.

The Bishop is not new to speaking on social justice and labor questions. In 1947, at Silver City, New Mexico, he opposed Communist organizing efforts in the Mine and Mill Union. Then came the unionization question at a plastics factory in Deming, N.M., at the Peyton meatpacking plant in El Paso, and the strike of the Hilton Hotel workers, where the Bishop refused to cross picket lines. He has also demanded only union builders in any church construction. The Bishop has not had the support of the local press in these issues, nor the support of prominent Catholics, nor all priests. In the Sunday collections, many priests have received notes of $0.00, indicating non-support for the Bishop and the church.

To date, two shop elections have been held in the Company; one in the cutting section in 1970, which the Union won and is now under appeal; the other, this past January, of the machinists, which is still under judgment by the National Labor Relations Board. The prognosis for the strike: it will be long and slow; and it will be won outside El Paso by the boycott and through the courts. (On April 23, the Supreme Court agreed to hear a challenge to Farah's employment policies.) There has been no violence. Public education on the issues, as well as the education of workers inside and outside the factory, is badly needed. There has been little local leadership from among the strikers, who receive $30 per week from the Union. Most are busy trying to get their next payments together. Sister Josephine, a Dominican dynamo, is active in managing the strike office, and Father Jesse Munoz provides the nearby Lady of Light church for Union meetings.

Farah, of course, claims that the Bishop is misguided in his support and that the Union is simply using the church for publicity. The Union, however, has generously stood by the strikers, backing a spontaneous strike which it did not call and was not ready for in any way.

No one has attacked Farah as being a "sweatshop" or any better or worse than any other local employer. There were scattered hopes that the annual stockholders' meeting would produce some step toward settlement, but these obviously proved overly optimistic. As it remains, time, faith, will, education, public support, and an awakening Christian social conscience, hold the answer.

ROBERT GETZ

(Father Robert Getz is social action director of the El Paso diocese.)

COMING

GARY MACEOIN writes about post-Conciliar Catholicism in Latin America:

"For reasons little related to Latin America's problems or needs, the Vatican is committed to maintaining the subordination of the Church in Latin America to the hemisphere's reactionary regimes. Particularly since *Humanae Vitae*—as a bishop recently remarked to me—Rome's primary concern in the naming and promotion of bishops has been 'blind obedience, Counter-Reformation style.' This limits its choice to the conservative wing of the Church."

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NEW MISSION FOR THE LEFT

MICHAEL NOVAK

The greatest strength of the "youth movement" of the mid-1960s lay in its quest for identity and community, its thirst for values, its questioning of the conveyor belt on which social engineering had seemed to place it. There was, in the youth movement, a genuine quest for what Maritain called "being," that sense of authenticity not quite the same as the "authenticity" of which Lionel Trilling has recently written with admirable skill.

The youth movement of the 1960s, like any human movement, fell short in some respects: in its blindness to its own class interest, in its allegiance to "the myth of the Pure Protester." Its failings were altogether American. Rather than face the complexities of a pluralistic society and the slowness of democratic procedures, it sought swift and direct remedies, oblivious to its own weakness, the legitimate claims of other interests, and the overwhelming counterattacks that might be (and were) launched against it. Leslie Fiedler in the mid-fifties wrote of *An End to Innocence*. It has happened once again.

But there were *two* enemies discerned by the youth movement, and that discernment marked its originality. Habitually, college professors and writers have imagined themselves as underdogs, faithful and long-suffering laborers on the side of human progress. The New Left argued cogently that "the knowledge industry" had come to be a new establishment, and that much that passed as "liberal" was not humane.

The youth movement recognized, as well, the establishment Richard Nixon represents, the establishment of corporate power and conservative interests. But it was preoccupied with "corporate liberalism," rather than with "corporate conservatism." It underestimated the strength of the latter, and the fragmentation of the former.

American liberalism is a cultural force of many origins and many inspirations. Once upon a time, Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Moynihan, and Norman Podhoretz, were—and in a certain perspective, are still today—"men of the Left." A little to the Left of them, Irving Howe and Michael Harrington were also "men of the Left." At one time, all these men were allies; at present, the two groups seem divided: the hard-nosed, interests-group Left, and the almost-religious, value-oriented Left. Michael Harrington is a quasi-saintly figure, Irving Howe is a guardian of true socialist-democratic vision. By comparison, Podhoretz and the others seem to many perversely critical of the Left, too prudent, not visionary.

Besides these two groups, there are also the cadres of sociologists, lawyers, historians, poverty workers, political scientists, engineers and others whose liberalism and technical skills brought them to massive pre-eminence under the New Frontier and the Great Society. One thinks here of Arthur Schlesinger, McGeorge Bundy, John Kenneth Galbraith, Bayless Manning, Adam Yarmolinski and others; add, too, *The New Republic*. In the Eisenhower era, such men were necessary to the Left, but part merely of a more or less ineffectual minority. Arthur Schlesinger discerned "a vital center" which they might lead, and the razor-thin victory of John F. Kennedy (which at first many opposed) gave them a chance.

There are other streams of the American Left, more anarchist and radical in inspiration, which figures as diverse as Alan Ginsberg and Noam Chomsky might suggest. Against the three mentioned above, the New Left arose in protest. Daniel Bell, Michael Harrington, Arthur Schlesinger—to name but one person from each group—were suddenly "the enemy."

The protest of the New Left was rooted in a kind of religious protest. The *humanity* of affluent, mobile, idealistic students and teachers was being insulted—insulted by mindless modernization, bureaucratic manipulation, lack of soul. The Old Left talked interests, economic realism, "reasonable" discourse. On the receiving end, the resultant social engineering was not so pleasant. Clark Kerr's vision of the "multiversity" exhibited to many in cold, clear terms the emptiness at the heart of "progress."

The Left had tended to hold that, economic issues being resolved, human happiness would flow. Young persons whose economic problems seemed solved found on the Left pitifully little advice on how to become a good human being. They had been taught how to manipulate the world extrinsically. At the heart of the Left was a void.

Contradictory values are taught by American institutions. Some contradictions are hidden from an older generation (still nourished by values they never explicitly recognized) but painfully exposed in the lives of the young. John Dewey once told his students that reading pre-twentieth-century materials was a waste of time. The high, trustworthy moral qualities *he* took for granted were not made altogether explicit in his work. *He* knew their historic intellectual context; less and less so would succeeding generations of students.

The Left, in a word, tended to lean on materials that attacked or debunked the moral and spiritual values on which the Left itself depended. The Left valued honesty. But why choose honesty as especially valuable? The Left valued community as well as science. But was not the social unfolding of the latter everywhere destroying the former, even among work-

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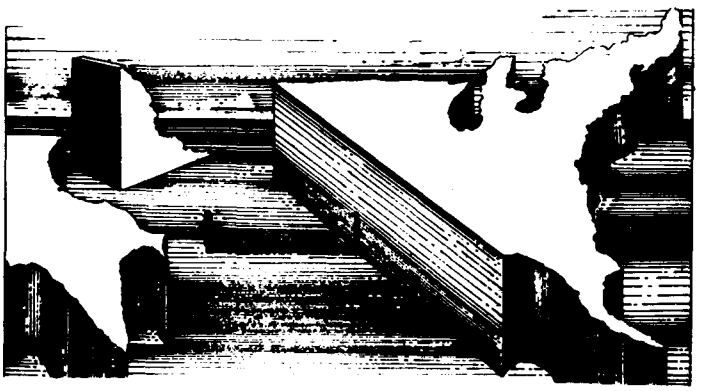
AMERICA AND THE POW's

BERNARD SKLAR



Torn between two emotions

The return of America's Prisoners of War from Indochina has brought a number of surprises—their relative good health, their tendency to celebrate the old virtues; to salute the flag, praise their commander-in-chief, etc. —but perhaps the most interesting of all is the way in which the nation as a whole responded to their ordeal. No matter what point of view one takes, there can be no question that the patriots, the zealots of Honor and Courage and Country have carried the day; and chief among those in the vanguard have been the members of the popular press. Beginning with the first official contact of American POW's with their American liaison teams, there has been a steady stream of heart-warming and human-interest stories, first about how proud and dignified and brave they were and then, at the first opportunity, how much they suffered in the way of "torture" and other cruelties in the hands of the enemy.

All of this had, to say the least, a kind of classical Kabuki quality. It is as if we were witnessing an ancient morality play with the characters all cast in unmistakable shades of black and white, their faces painted and their clothes appropriately arranged to reflect unmitigated good and evil. But that obviously is not the case. This was a disastrous war. It cost us over 50,000 lives and Vietnamese, North and South, over one and a half million if one counts the civilian population. It has devastated (and continues to devastate) a number of Southeast Asian countries and left a series of deep scars in our own land. And what is perhaps the cruelest joke of all—it has accomplished nothing. As one of the POW's has said:

> I don't think we won the war at all. . . . They asked for complete, total withdrawal of U.S. forces, a complete halt of air activity over Vietnam, the stopping of support of South Vietnam and for elections. Christ Almighty, in looking at the peace terms and everything, that's exactly what they got.

What then can we make of this most recent spectacle and what does it tell us of the future?

As in all complex sociopolitical affairs there are several levels of analysis that are appropriate to any understanding of this matter. From one point of view, it can be seen that the critics of the war have actually been more successful than they ever dreamed. They have won two victories. The first is that it is inconceivable that the U.S. will again allow itself to be drawn into the kind of adventure that led to this debacle in the first place. The American people and particularly the Congress, in spite of its many and apparent weaknesses, will not stand by and watch the President intrude our presence in some foreign land for any ostensible Communist-containing, democracy-protecting purpose however benign its original intention. We have learned, at too great a cost, to what this can lead. I am well aware that this *affaire d'honneur*, this incredibly egocentric war to sustain a nation's pride, is not over and that much remains to be done to stay our murderous weapons and prevent them from further destroying Laos and Cambodia. Nevertheless, and regardless of how long these death throes of our passion for making failure disappear by further failure last, there cannot in my mind be another war of this kind for the U.S. in the foreseeable future. Clandestine encouragement or even support of such operations by foreign forces, yes; but the sovereign use of uniformed troops and their supporting

BERNARD SKLAR *is an assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Southern California.*

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aircraft and ships, never. We have had it as the policeman of the world.

In this respect the nation has truly matured and from one point of view the entire antiwar movement is a living testament to the development of a people from a race of dependent, sheep-like and dutiful servitors of the sovereign will to a questioning, skeptical and truly democratic nation in which the people's will and the people's voice is heard. Needless to say, that voice is still weak and efforts are being made to suppress its freest expression (witness the current struggle over a journalist's right to protect his sources of information). Nevertheless, it would strain the imagination to believe that we could ever go back to a time like those prior to World War I or II, or as recently as the early 1950s, when the American people could be aroused to armed vengeance by the traditional slogans of "my country right or wrong" or for that matter, such silly ideas as a "war to end all wars."

For many, and in particular I am thinking of those who have so much enjoyed the spectacle of our returning POW's and their vaunted bravery, this is a great tragedy. For they are the Miniver Cheevys who hanker for days of old when men were bold. And to be honest one must join them in this sadness, for it is quite true that a critical, non-chauvinistic society is in many respects devoid of the kind of simplistic qualities and their attendant emotions for which men have traditionally hungered. That is not to say that honor, and dignity and courage have disappeared from the earth; it is just that their expression has taken on much more complex and less readily accessible forms. We need a re-education for half of the twentieth century of what honor and dignity and courage are. To some extent, men like Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo, violating the prevailing codes of their fellow-men and revealing the duplicity and deceit of those in authority because of the higher ideals of justice and mercy, have taught us what this is. It will take some time before we truly understand what this really means but the recent Pentagon trial should help us greatly in that respect.

The second victory for the antiwar movement is the fact that the nation's leaders have come to accept the realities of the current engagement—or at least not to suggest, as they have so strongly in the past, its irrealities. There is virtually no talk about the original ideals that motivated this war: the idea that we were in Indochina to protect the people there from the encroachments of Communism. In fact, many of the highest leaders of our country have been heard referring to the engagement as a civil war, something that the liberals had to scream at them only a short time ago.

In addition, it has been drummed into the consciousness of the nation that there is something predatory about this kind of warfare; that it is not just to despoil another people's land, regardless of one's war aims. To be sure, this notion is only slowly sinking into our consciousness for we still witness daily assaults of this kind in Laos and Cambodia. But these depredations can be likened to a grandfather's clause. Once this current episode is over, something which could, as I indicated earlier, linger on for some time, it will nonetheless be harder and harder and ultimately impossible to napalm, defoliate and in other ways strip a country of its vegetation or indiscriminately mow down its population in an effort to win some obscure or ill-defined purpose set up by the Defense Department. War, like consumption, is bound to be subject to increasing scrutiny for its contents as well as its effects. It will not be easy to do so but as must be evident from the kind of scrutiny given the Mylai incident and the coverage afforded by the press from the earliest days of war, we are not the innocent, awe-struck people we once were in the face of our war-making machinery. Much has been done also by the Congress and countless critics to demystify that process, and to move from the point at which we were only a

short decade ago, when anything the Pentagon wanted they got, to the point where every major enlargement of its potential, every effort at new arms or larger forces brings on the kind of Congressional inquiry and public debate we saw in connection with the ABM system and over the TFX or F-111 affair.

At another level this may all seem quite hollow, for it is clear that we continue to bomb an innocent people in Laos and Cambodia, the Pentagon continues to enjoy one of the largest budgets of all time, and the President seems to be carrying the day in obscuring the true outcome of the war in Vietnam and our role in the destruction and debasement of that nation. Rallies against South Vietnam's Thieu were feeble during his recent tour of the country and it seems as if anyone raised his head to suggest, as Jane Fonda did, that the POW's were far from candid about their own situations and the war, they were mowed down in a barrage of vilification and slander. In many respects this should not surprise us. Our war has ended in Vietnam and a large number of people, probably a majority of Americans, feel that the President did it—got us out of Vietnam, however imperfectly, and thus "ended the war." The subtlety of thinking that would be required for a true assessment of the capitu-

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lation that was involved in that process and the role that was played by the antiwar minority in bringing such an end to pass is something that the public is not ready to undertake. Just before the release of the first POW's in February I suggested in these pages [Jan. 5] that there would never a better time to conduct such a debate. I also pointed out the propaganda potential for the Administration in the returning POW's and warned that they would be used to that end, which, of course, they were. But it would not have been possible for that to occur if there had not been active complicity in that respect on the part of an important segment of the press, a vast sector of the public and most of the POW's themselves.

To understand what is happening here one must fall back on some rather primitive theories of compensation. To some, obviously, this will appear too simple. Among these I count the inveterate paranoids who see a conspiracy in any reactionary behavior on the part of our government or its people. But it is my belief that this is to a very large degree "spontaneous" and in many respects "unrehearsed." That the President and his staff have seized the opportunity to exploit the POW's is thoroughly understandable, for it is in the nature of the political process, if not the human condition, never to say "No" to a good thing. The government has been embarrassed by its involvement in this war, its failure to attain any of its objectives and only under the weight of an overwhelming vote on the part of the American people, only when almost no one supported the war and its aims, did President Nixon discharge his duties and try to put an end to it in its most manifest form. In the continuation of these same policies in Laos and Cambodia, however, we see that the President does not feel that the people are right but that they must be appeased. Taking us out of Vietnam was the way to do that and is just what the President did.

It would thus be naive to believe that he could accept his responsibility in the failure of his Southeast Asian policy. This is a new concept of government. As was demonstrated in the recent election, even someone who tries to exercise such humility to a modest degree, as Senator McGovern did, is doomed to failure. Men, as some people tell us, are proud; so that when they are wrong they must do everything they can to avoid the onus of failure and this is just what the Administration has done; hence, the coining of the blatantly ridiculous notion of "peace with honor." Honor for the President perhaps, but certainly not for the American people. All one has to do is check the polls of world opinion to realize where America stands in the eyes of the world.

Hence also the studied innocence of the Administration in the face of so many splendid tributes to its behavior by the POW's themselves. "After all," the Administration seems to be saying, "isn't that just what we've been telling you all along. Mr. Nixon is our great leader and he has triumphed again." But what we were seeing was a bankrupt policy making its last grasp for credence and respectability. If I am not mistaken, it has probably been as big a surprise to those in the White House as it has to many of us that the Administration has gotten the response that it has. It is for that reason that we must look at the other arms of this mighty embrace—the POW's, the press and the public—to understand what is really happening.

In terms of the POW's, it seems to me we must be be realistic. Some of them, it is quite clear, had second thoughts about the war; it would be impossible for 590 diverse human beings not to differ on something that controversial. The fact that they were orchestrated to express a ritual respect for their country's ideals and the President's wisdom and courage only made this chorus of hurrahs all the more ludicrous as a result. Perhaps in time their true sentiments about the war or, for that matter, the true conditions under which they lived will come out. The fact that none of them had the wit to understand the political implications of the antiwar movement and the fact that the visits of such individuals to North Vietnam (in face of heavy American sentiment) might have had some bearing on the improvement in their conditions in the late 1960s is only another reminder that these are very unreal times for the POW's indeed.

The POW's have gotten the full treatment, with brass bands, red carpet and all. Governor Reagan has hosted a big group of them at a series of banquets, and countless of small occasions have born testimony to the fact that some people want the POW's to feel that they are good guys, regardless of how these same people may feel about the war and its inherent failure. It would be too much to expect them not to be caught up and, to some degree, swept along with these emotions. Some, of course, are career officers and for them it might just be a matter of survival. But for all it could not have been a pleasant experience to be imprisoned for as long as eight and a half years in the case of some of the pilots. As Steven V. Roberts of the *New York Times* has pointed out, "Many of the POW's clearly want to believe that the war ended honorably and that their sacrifice was worth it." As a result, when the opportunity was given to them to testify in support of the President's position, a peace with honor, they did so. What is of more interest to us and provides greater ambiguity is the behavior of the public and press.

Anyone who has followed the press coverage on the POW's in recent days must be impressed with the number of stories and the by-lines of those who have extolled the virtues of our men, their ingenuity in finding ways to communicate with each other, their courage in the face of often obscurely defined, as well as real, punishments, their endless imagination at devising ways to amuse and even educate themselves and the pains they

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took to remain steadfast to their nation and its principles. The wire services and the staffs of all the major papers seemed to explode with the output of what one can only surmise was the suppressed creativity of a number of journalists who had for so long wanted to say something good about this nation and its people. Even some better known journalists like Keyes Beech of the *Chicago Daily News* got into the act for it really was hard to resist.

And so it was for a great number of Americans. There had been such a long winter of ill tales of our servicemen, of our country and its government, its motives and objectives; so much black painted upon a canvas that many people felt was gold and green and blue that something like an explosion was bound to occur. It is to the credit of traditional journalism that newspapermen understood, as I think many liberals failed to understand and exploit this opportunity. What it implies is that and that alone. It was a moment for nostalgia; to celebrate old and worn-out sentiments and ideals. It was as if someone had put on a Civil War pageant or World War I parade. Except for the clashing, incongruously modern backdrop of jet age aircraft and sophisticated telecommunications systems which permitted us to share this experience instantaneously and intimately, what one saw was America at its bravest and best. "Don't tell us what we are," the press seemed to be saying, "let us remind you of what we were."

In many ways one can share that feeling. Regardless of one's position in regard to the war, it is clear that American fighting men retain a salty nature and a kind of pluck reminiscent of Bill Mauldin's World War II cartoon characters, Willy and Joe, that one can quite appreciate. Unfortunately, we cannot separate this aspect of their character from what they did in Vietnam and elsewhere. Our innocence ended with the first reports of saturation bombing and destruction of a simple pastoral people in the face of a modern Juggernaut—America; on the rampage in Southeast Asia, escalating its revenge in tonnage of bombs and meaninglessness of devastation in geometric ratio to its frustration and anger at its self and its failure to achieve even one of its reconstituted purposes, civilian or military, in that hapless country.

And so many of us failed to rally. This too was to be expected. After all, the antiwar movement had paid a terrible price for its effort. Thousands of its sons had fled their homeland rather than share in this terrible crime and were now being excoriated for their courage. There were also the scars of thousands of rallies, demonstrations and confrontations and the never-to-be-forgotten pains of Chicago in 1968. In their prepared summaries of history which the POW's received from the Pentagon they were spared the details of that epoch but many of us can never forget them. Naturally there was anger that the perfidious President and his supporters should use this opportunity to such an end, but it was inevitably so. For America, insofar as this POW episode is concerned, is torn between two emotions, one born out of a past that many people wish to preserve but which obviously does not function for the world we live in and one the child of the terrible present. The former an emotion of simpler times, when men faced each other with guns and tanks rather than ultrasonic detectors and high-altitude bombing; the other a feeling that grows out of the realization that there are no heroes or devils in the world, only problems and men that are caught up in them.

Unfortunately it takes time for men to disgorge their old sentiments and take on the new, more useful ones that they need to adapt to their environment. Judging from everything we know from history, it is also among the more difficult things that human beings are asked to do; but do it we must or, again as history demonstrates, suffer devastation, decline or even extinction. In the twilight zone that separates one era from the next. there may be a moment when those men holding on to the ancient ideals make their last plea for dignity and respect and those representing the present and the future look on sullenly and with disdain. A stranger could very well have pity on them both, for there is much that is sad in the closing of the old world and the making of the new.

NEVA JOHNSON HERRINGTON

A SISTER'S WEDDING PARTY

Having known most of them before and since,
I search this time-brown photograph for signs:
Some warning missed. A post factum eye
Turning up history, not prophecy, makes
A lasting mystery not of what but why.
No answer in those nineteen smiling faces
Why some had secret, others bold disgraces,

Why the frogman turned homosexual and died
White-haired at thirty-eight or the kneeling man
With the flower girl is alcoholic or
The pilot crashed his plane, why some have lost
Only looks and tempers. One seems no more
Than another here lucky, bidden, exempt
By invitation from what could break or tempt

To death. Since I am there I ought to have
The answer for myself at least. Do I
Know what I was that long ago? Afraid,
No doubt, I'd spoil the mother's show, there
Because the second born, the honor maid,
Hoping against all law of bone and blood
To come out more beautiful than I could.

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POW's AND THE VETS

PETER J. OGNIBENE

America has been less charitable to her war veterans even after 'good' wars

Live television is expensive, so it is used sparingly. The President can of course command the air waves whenever he feels the urge to invade Cambodia or freeze meat prices, but the networks themselves normally limit live coverage to such spectacles as state funerals and moon walks. It was in the latter tradition that they brought the public live coverage of released American prisoners of war arriving at Clark Air Base in the Philippines.

Although the particular event was a "first," the format was thoroughly predictable. There was the landing, the emergence of the voyagers, the admiral's welcoming speech, a short, nice-to-be-home response and the waiting medical examiners. We had seen it all before with the astronauts, and if the event itself was unrehearsed, there was little doubt that everyone knew his part.

However recognizable the form, this time was different. The vehicle was not another numbered Apollo capsule bringing home astronauts from the moon; it was a C-141 military transport carrying American prisoners from Hanoi. Its arrival marked, both symbolically and substantively, the beginning of the end of America's Vietnam war. It was the light at the end of the tunnel the McNamaras and Westmorelands had claimed to have seen, only to learn their vision was a chimera. It was, finally, the end of that long, tortured process of withdrawal called "Vietnamization." The left said it had taken too long, the right called it a retreat, but the great center said nothing. The President called it "peace with honor."

As a vicarious participant in the return of the first group of POW's, my predominant feeling was one of relief. The POW's had been Nixon's bargaining chips, and he had played them for all they were worth. They had given him a reason to keep fighting and an excuse for not leaving. The bombing of North Vietnam, which had made most of these men prisoners in the first place, could now (I thought) never again be resumed unless Nixon dared to risk the inevitable capture of more pilots. No, General Thieu would just have to hack it alone—with American arms shipments and bombs on Cambodia—or learn to make do on the French Riviera.

From a personal standpoint, I was glad to see that the POW's seemed to be in good physical condition. Some of these men were friends or acquaintances from my cadet days, and I was happy for them and their families. Although just fourteen classes had been graduated from the Air Force Academy, more than a hundred graduates had been killed in the war. I have not tried to count the exact number, and I even let my subscription to the alumni newsletter lapse because the war had turned it into a casualty report. I realized that my resignation from the service three years ago and my subsequent efforts to lobby for an end to the war had probably put my political thinking at odds with that of most of the POW's, but for me their homecoming transcended politics.

President Nixon tried hard at first to make their return nonpolitical. He did not call it the greatest event since Creation nor did he give marching orders to his highly experienced public relations crew at the White House. He could have had a page-one San Clemente reception for the POW's, but he said it was a time for the men and their families to try to put their lives back together. These humane impulses, alas, soon gave way to more base political instincts, and the President in his statements to the press began using the POW's to rationalize not granting amnesty to those who had fled the draft or the army and to castigate those who had opposed his war policies, taking no pains whatever to distinguish Congressional doves and letter-writing citizens from bomb-throwers. It was a sad spectacle. Here was a President who a few months before, had won the electoral votes of 49 states resorting to shameless exploitation of an emotional symbol in order to knife his political opponents. In 1952 when a businessmen's slush fund for Nixon had been exposed, he used Tricia's little dog, Checkers, to stay on Ike's ticket; now he was using the POW's to strike back at those who had opposed his notion of "peace with honor." It was the old Nixon's classic tactic: the fastest way to a man's gut is through his heart.

Since their return, the POW's have been thrust into the limelight. In a war which gave the country so many medal-winners but no heroes, they have become the honored ones, less because they were courageous, though many were, than because they survived. No such honors are being paid the dead and wounded of this war; indeed, it seems the nation is trying to drive Vietnam

PETER J. OGNIBENE *is a Contributing Editor of* The New Republic.

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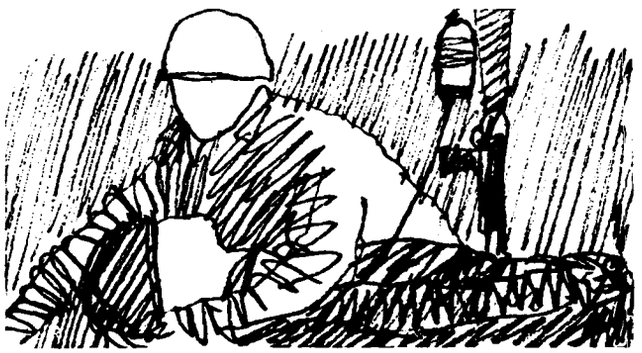
completely from its memory. Such forgetfulness is a luxury some cannot afford. Two and a half million men served in Vietnam, 46,000 died there and 300,000 were wounded: 23,000 of them badly enough to receive 100-percent disability payments. For the seriously wounded veteran, there can be no forgetting Vietnam.

America has been less than charitable to her war veterans even after the so-called "good" wars. Forty-one years ago, World War I veterans made the first march on Washington to petition the government to pay them the bonus that had been authorized. In spite of their march and other forms of protest, the bonus was vetoed by four successive Presidents before it was finally enacted (over Roosevelt's veto) in 1936. Last fall President Nixon pocket-vetoed the Veterans' Health Care Expansion Act and the National Cemetery Act after both had unanimously passed the Senate and House. In February, when Nixon's budget went to Capitol Hill, Congressmen soon discovered that $160 million in veterans' disability compensation benefits had been cut. The effects would have been severe. For example, a veteran who had had his leg amputated at the hip would have lost $169 a month and another $60 a month if he had dependents. Con-



gress was outraged, and a week later the White House restored the funds, blamed the cut on a Veterans' Administration official and fired him.

The Administration's lack of concern for the Vietnam veteran is also evident in the unemployment statistics. The unemployment rate for young Vietnam veterans has been running almost twice the national average. Veterans, ages 20 to 24, have an unemployment rate of about 11 percent whereas the rate for nonveterans of the same age group is about 9 percent. (Nationwide it has been just under 6 percent.) The statistics for unemployment only show those who are actively in the job market. Some veterans have become so discouraged in searching for a job they have simply given up and no longer turn up in the statistics. A Lou Harris survey conducted for the VA found that 15 percent of all Vietnam veterans interviewed were unemployed. Those who were employed had apparently received little help from the government: Harris concluded that only 4 percent had been "materially helped" by local employment officers in getting an employment offer.

While the war was winding down, there was an alarming increase in heroin addiction among American soldiers in Vietnam. Heroin and the implements needed to inject it became as easy to obtain off post as beer. Journalists reported the drug could be purchased just a few blocks from the gates of Ton Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon as well as around most other military installations. Soldiers and reporters had no trouble finding such places, but the South Vietnamese police did. Some of Saigon's top generals were implicated in the heroin trade, but the Thieu government did little to investigate such allegations. Three years ago, estimates of heroin addiction among American troops ranged from 10 to 15 percent; the effects of this widescale exposure to heroin are still being felt. In 1971, the VA reported 7,102 hospital admissions and 3,360 outpatient admissions of individuals who showed signs of opiate dependence or abuse. Last year, the VA reported an increase to 15,044 hospital admissions and 10,902 outpatient admissions where opiate dependence or abuse was indicated. This year, the VA expanded to 20,000 its nationwide treatment capacity for veterans suffering from drug dependence. An annual caseload of 800,000 outpatient visits is anticipated.

In March a staff report of the House Appropriations Committee was highly critical of the Nixon Administration's funding of veterans' medical care and the operation of VA hospitals. Local hospital directors and VA regional officials had requested 180,000 hospital personnel for the coming fiscal year, but the Office of Management and Budget, an agency within the Executive Office of the President, cut the request to 154,000, which is about 1000 less than the current level. VA officials in Washington admitted that their average daily patient load of 81,500 was about 4000 below what Congress had authorized, and committee investigators found that, as a consequence, hospitals had been refusing admission to some veterans in need of care. Head nurses in the 14 VA hospitals investigated all had to work overtime to keep up with their paperwork, and some of them were worried about "not being able to provide bedridden patients proper massage" and other treatment to prevent "permanent damage to the limbs" or "serious circulatory and respiratory problems." If understaffing and underfinancing of VA hospitals continue, the committee investigators warned, the result could be "inferior medical care" for our hospitalized veterans.

We sent American servicemen to fight a war in Vietnam in order to prop up a government which stood by while tens of thousands of them were addicted to heroin. If Saigon did not actually run the heroin trade, it certainly acquiesced in it. Our direct combat role in Vietnam has ended; our veterans and prisoners have returned. The POW gets a big welcome-home, free vacations and a lifetime pass to major league baseball games. The veteran gets his discharge certificate, a packet of VA

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brochures and little else. If he has a drug habit he wants to kick, he can go to a VA hospital, but when he leaves, where will he go? In all likelihood, he will return to the very environment which led him into drugs. If he wants to improve his position in life, he will find many obstacles in his path. If he wants to further his education, he will find that the GI bill barely covers the cost of tuition at many schools. If he cannot get financial support from the school itself, he will probably have to hold a part-time job—if he can find one. The veteran who seeks government help in finding a job will probably find instead crowded waiting-rooms at VA service centers or state employment offices where he will be asked to fill out one form and stand in line only to be given another form and told to stand in another line. In the end he will have gotten nothing for his time but frustration. The Nixon Administration is dismantling the Office of Economic Opportunity and cutting back on manpower training programs; the few government jobs which are occasionally available are inevitably of the low-paying, dead-end variety.

Even death may not end the problems of veterans. Last November, with the burial of a World War II veteran at the Culpeper (Virginia) National Cemetery, the last national cemetery plot between North Carolina and Long Island was filled. The National Cemetery Act, which President Nixon vetoed would have authorized a special burial plot allowance of $150, in addition to the present allowance of $250, when a veteran cannot be buried in a national cemetery. An additional allowance of up to $800 would have been authorized for the burial of veterans who died of service-connected causes. The President said the bill was fiscally irresponsible.

So it has come to this: a President who pursued a war with zeal has turned deaf and blind to the plight of the men who fought that war. Although there are many in Congress who want to set matters aright, there have not been enough of them to overturn Nixon's vetoes. A tax increase, many economists believe, is inevitable, but instead of facing up to the needs and costs of government, the President and Congress have been jockeying for position so that each can blame the other when taxes finally do go up. Tax avoidance has thus been raised to the level of moral principle.

The prospects of change are grim—more so because there seems to be no public pressure to improve the lot of our Vietnam veterans. The veterans organizations, so vocal when the matter was amnesty or the bombing of Hanoi, have been almost completely ineffective. A public outrage over the treatment of the men it sent to war could compel the Administration to adopt more humane policies, but there seems to be little public interest. So we sit in front of our TV sets watching astronauts and ex-POWs set foot onto alien lands when we should be watching a Vietnam amputee taking his first steps with a prosthetic device.

HISTORICAL HISTRIONICS

THE SCREEN

Hitler: The Last Ten Days and *The Nelson Affair* are almost interchangeable failures. The former recreates the *Führerdämmerung* in the Berlin bunker, while the latter deals with the amours of Horatio Lord Nelson and Lady Emma Hamilton. Both films manage to get across essentially the same message, however, despite very different intentions and contrary to the intentions of either of them. This myopic message is that all great men of history—whether good or evil, lionized or debunkered—are bores.

Myopia is very much the visual style of these films too. It's the style that goes with their message because, paradoxically, the closer one gets to an historical personage, the more diminished he is. Up close every tyrant, even the most absolute and infamous, is a petty tyrant. This is the disappointment of *Hitler*. There may be 100,000 dead Jews for each of the sixty feet of concrete protecting the *Führerbunker*, but inside the bunker itself what matters is that Hitler has prohibited smoking. Only this sort of issue can touch personally the lives of those so close to the *Führer*. However enormous the atrocities may be, they are remote. At most they are occasion for some tedious, gratuitous rhetoric from Hitler himself.

But then everything produces this sort of rhetoric from Hitler. Before the credits are even over we know Hitler will turn out thus, for there are some endorsements from historians guaranteeing the authenticity of the dialogue. Such endorsements should be regarded like the Surgeon General's warning on a cigarette pack. Movie companies only resort to them from fear that their historical portraiture is trite beyond belief. Alec Guinness wrestles the intractable part of Hitler; but as with history, so with the man, all is lost from the beginning. Guinness adopts a bearish stoop that is startling at first, and his stamping and slapping betray the almost effeminate lack of co-ordination in the supreme *Ubermensch*. But the voice Guinness affects is all wrong. It's his Gulley Jimson voice from *The Horse's Mouth*. Nor is there anything Guinness can do about his eyes, which are a basset hound's where Hitler's were a Doberman pinscher's.

Like the historical figures, history itself seems paradoxically diminished at this close range. The fascination of the film is the chance to glimpse the ultimate embodiment of corruption at the ultimate moment of his power. But even in this innermost sanctum of history, nothing is either affirmed or denied, and events overtake men inexplicably, almost imperceptibly. Each denouement in the plot passes unnoticed. A devoted officer (Simon Ward) entrusted with Hitler's political will destroys the document after escaping the bunker. What crime by Hitler—or mere indiscretion—could have alienated the

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man at this point? It's impossible to imagine, and the film gives no clue. A revulsion for Hitler that Eva Braun (Doris Kunstman) develops also catches us unaware. Even Hitler himself knows not what he does. On one occasion he starts to take a dog for a walk; but on reaching the upper door, he looks out, thinks better of the expedition, and returns underground. It isn't until a scene or two later that we realize this is *the* turning point where Hitler admitted Germany's defeat.

When word arrives in the common room that Hitler is dead, Goebbels' wife takes out the case containing her cyanide capsule and withdraws from it . . . a cigarette The others then join her exultantly in their first public smoke in months. Perhaps it's just the fate of dictators always to make a grand entrance and an anti-climactic exit. Director Ennio de Concini certainly provides Hitler with the former when a series of steelplated doors roll back to reveal him at the film's beginning. But in effect this film is still only about Hitler's exit, which here seems as isolated from the rest of his life as the bunker is from the war outside. Cut off this way, Hitler's exit suggests that evil is not just banal, but silly.

It seems natural to think of Hitler and Lord Nelson as just the opposite sorts of historical bigwigs. *The Nelson Affair* covers something close to Nelson's last ten months rather than his last ten days. It's a period when he was being kept from his greatest glory by his promise to one other person, not led to defeat by his inability to care about the deaths of millions. Moreover, where the *Führer* dominates Eva completely in *Hitler,* Lady Hamilton, as might be expected, is the dominant one in *The Nelson Affair.* Eva spends all her time in the bunker having mud packs applied and otherwise beautifying herself. When she weeps, she won't let Adolf comfort her because he mustn't see her when she's ugly. She is, as a shocked Nazi aviatrix remarks, "so bourgeois."

But Emma Hamilton (Glenda Jackson) spends all her time swilling brandy, belching, and humiliating Nelson with her drunken petulance and vulgarity. This is the myopia of *The Nelson Affair*—the sort of nearsightedness than can see clearly only when close enough to see how red and blotchy Lady Hamilton's complexion is from all that drinking. In 1941, Alexander Korda made a film called *That Hamilton Woman,* which is one of those historical spectacles where the characters always stand in the middle distance of acres and acres of polished floors. If I could choose between Korda's pretty romanticism and *The Nelson Affair*'s ugly romanticism —for that is the only distinction between them—I'd prefer Korda's. There is an appealing epistemological humility in Korda's medium shots. In *The Nelson Affair* we don't necessarily know more because we get closer, though I think director James Cellan Jones supposes we do. Like the make-up Jones has ordered for Glenda Jackson, the role of Lady Hamilton that Terence Rattigan has written is full of red blotches.

The similarity between Guiness' Hitler and Peter Finch's Lord Nelson shows most in the posture. There is of course in Finch's performance no trace of the impotent gestures that Guinness affects. But like Guinness, Finch carries his historical role with a certain bearishness. In the somewhat layered clothing of the period, Finch looks almost as if he were trying to puff himself up to fill the role of a great man. His Lord Nelson differs from Guinness' Hitler only in the way a full bladder differs from an empty one.

The same quality of rhetoric that was intended to sound empty in *Hitler* is also intended to sound momentous here. Since Nelson is a physically crippled and henpecked man, he cuts a rather sorry figure. The rhetoric is designed to compensate for this. Dominic Guard, the young actor who played a go-between a couple of years ago, is cast as an in-between here. He is torn between his admiration for what Nelson represents and his revulsion at what Lady Hamilton is. In effect, he is a mere foil, someone convenient for other characters to give long sermons to explaining that things in this films are not what they seem. But these little set pieces are, like Hitler's monologues, a lot of tommyrot. Any schoolboy half Master Guard's age ought to be able to see through such rhetoric, and through both these films as well.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

JOHN DITSKY

HOLDERLIN FRAGMENTS

That stuff smeared
on a particular turret
of my child's memory
is a fragmented German
prisoner, bazooka-shot
for fun. The marksman's
buddy told the story
in my hearing; said
only scraps of coat
were found afterwards.

But I survived
that first atrocity
all right and, that
one past, the others
that came by. No
news report fazes
me now: I kill
without pause. Pity's
kraut stuff spattered
long ago on the Rhine.

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an exchange of views
Homosexuality

Oneonta, New York

To the Editors: At last—you may be just in time: The two *excellent* articles, very humanly sensitive, on homosexuality in your April 6 issue deserve plaudits. The Church has come too late too often to the needs of the human heart thus neglecting the Gospel as a plea for a human society built on freedom, love and human fulfillment. To Tom Driver and Peter Fink—*right on*!

However, even in our (certainly) latent response to the homosexual as a human being, there is some concern on my part that the subtle male dominance theory is prevailing here too. Will you invite some lesbians to write for *Commonweal* . . . or will the circle remain as ever where women are concerned—whether they be straight or gay? ? ?

In fact, I sense that even in the matter of linguistics the *word* homosexual (as specifically male) comes more easily and more frequently than *lesbian* (as specifically female)? ? ?

Also, how come all the "new books" sent to Tom Driver about *gay* liberation were all by men? Hasn't *Commonweal* read anything about *gay liberation* by women? Driver and Fink get at least a B+—*Commonweal* gets only a C (. . . for chauvinistic maybe? ? ?).

Remember, "God made them male *and female*." Women do subscribe to *Commonweal.*

MARION C. SMITH, RSM
Chaplain, Oneonta Newman Foundation

Potomac, Md.

To the Editors: Your article by Tom Driver and your accompanying editorial on homosexuality are truly the last straw. I have never read material so totally confused and out of keeping with the true Catholic position, so distant from the thousands of families we have known in this country and abroad, so weak, so pathetic, so—sick. Not in its compassion for homosexuals, but in its (in effect) telling them they are normal, and telling those with like proclivities to carry on and join their clubs and do their thing. This can only encourage those who might have overcome their problem during those impressionistic years to lead normal lives as men into weakening their efforts and falling into the trap, which can only haunt them for the rest of their lives. Instead of guiding those with such problems toward curative programs and dealing with the hard core homosexuals in other special ways, you have opened the door to still more promiscuity, particularly on college campuses where Hollywood values, pressured on them through the media, including the flood of pernicious pornography truly flooding the book stalls, have smothered respectable human values.

'The Church and The Homosexual'

There is not a line in either the ramblings of Fink or Driver which deals with basic causes of homosexuality, be they rooted in a bad home environment or other, and how those causes might be dealt with.

When I renewed my subscription on a trial basis, I had assumed that Commonweal was still a Catholic magazine. It is clearly not, and I can get the line you have succumbed to in almost any decadent modern journal. Please cancel my subscription.

RICHARD J. WARD

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: I remember back in those days when an ejaculation was a vocal prayer, holy people used to argue whether the religious state in life was better than the married state (the single state always received short shrift, it was almost a sign of contradiction).

Now I see in the *Commonweal* editorial on homosexuality that the grounds of the debate have shifted somewhat. In the context of Christian sexual behavior, marital and extramarital, you state that sexual love "finds its most appropriate expression in marriage."

I believe the argument from of old was resolved in such a way that individual subjective conditions were far more important and determinative than anything objective; consequently, comparisons and claims to superiority of one state in life over another lost their meaning and it became fashionable to argue this way no longer.

Even though the grounds of the debate have changed, I wonder if the present discussion will run the same course, and if ultimately statements comparing Christian expressions of sexual love as appropriate, more appropriate or most appropriate, will lose validity?

WILLIAM G. AYLWARD

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: In suggesting that the church reformulate guidelines for Christian sexual behavior in regards to homosexuality and welcome homosexuals into the church, the editors have apparently overlooked the divine revelation that "neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor the evil-tongued, nor the greedy will possess the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Christian charity for all our brothers and sisters should prompt us to reject deterministic theories of homosexuality and to assist homosexuals to grow, as

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all true Christians hope to grow, as individuals whose lives are developing in love and service to God and mankind as taught by Jesus.

RICHARD P. FITZGIBBONS, M.D.

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editors: The deepest sentiments and hopes of countless gay Catholics were given vigorous voice in your issue of April 6. We have been studied, psychoanalyzed, and rationalized to death. More than a plea for understanding the editorial and articles by Tom Driver and Father Fink were a clear mandate for action. Congratulations! Not for the courage, but for the honesty, charity, and sense of justice you have demonstrated in publishing them.

While the church it is true has offered precious little help in behalf of gay Catholics, it is only fair to praise the many priests (DIGNITY has nearly one hundred active priest members) who unbeknown to their parishioners work within the Catholic gay community.

The whole gay issue is about to prick the conscience of the church and explode whatever wisdom she has on human sexuality. The hierarchy will be happy to discover that what will be damaged in the explosion is the lock which has for centuries barred from the church sheep, starved for the saving life she alone can give.

CHARLES W. WELLS
President
DIGNITY

San Francisco, Calif.

To the Editors: While you are to be commended on the articles on homosexuality in the April 6, 1973 issue of *Commonweal*, I should like to bring to your attention one rather serious shortcoming. Rarely is there any indication that the writers of these articles are aware of the existence of homosexual women. Lesbians share in many of the social and psychological problems discussed primarily in relation to male homosexuals. But often a lesbian's life style and concerns are quite different. For example, she very probably does not inhabit the gay "ghetto society" of Peter Fink's article.

At any rate, female homosexuals need an enlightened and supportive church as much as do male homosexuals. Recognition of this fact is a simple and humane step which *Commonweal* would do well to take.

NANCY MANAHAN

East Lansing, Mich.

To the Editors: I applaud the Driver and Fink articles on homosexuality in your current issue. As a member of a commission that has been studying this subject for the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan during the past year and a half, I am familiar with the authors' soul searching. Our commission's report is still being written, but the thrust of our present thinking is clear:

Love is a greater mystery than we had thought.

There are indeed many rooms in its house (as we had already been told on good authority).

When its feasts are celebrated, the homosexuals who join us there have not necessarily come to steal the spoons.

ANNE C. GARRISON
Michigan State University

City Withheld

To the Editors: As a semiretired missioner, approaching the Golden Jubilee of ordination, I have a weekly session in the confessional of a big city church which has hourly novena services to Our Blessed Mother.

Among my penitents I have a man with tendencies to homosexuality and a woman who is a lesbian.

The man confesses thoughts and desires to inordinate sexuality which he fears he has deliberately entertained; the woman actually sins but she is striving to avoid repeating—an effort that is encouraging.

They are good and intelligent Christians contending with an abnormality they cannot understand. Their confessor is still more bewildered, but treating penitents who have the necessary dispositions for absolution and who are seeking the grace of the sacrament to help them in their hard struggle, I try to be understanding, sympathetic and Christian. And I find it is paying dividends.

All this ballyhoo we hear these days about gay society and the rights—civil, moral and religious—of homosexuals contributes absolutely nothing to the solution of this problem. They are not aware of the judgment of God Himself on Onan.

Like all people with serious moral problems, homosexuals need sympathetic understanding; encouragement in their efforts to lead a normal moral life and the grace that comes to them in the sacrament of penance—the only help they have in their very real struggle to live fruitful Christian lives.

I commend such heavily burdened men and women to the mercy of God and to the kindly and sympathetic concern of my fellow priests in the confessional.

NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST.

Bronx, N.Y.

To the Editors: Congratulations for your courage in bringing to light the most serious undiscussed and hence unresolvable problem of our society . . . a problem for which the church through a complexity of attitudes, ranging all the way from blanket condemnation of all aspects of the homosexual lifestyle to that of blighting condescension, has vastly contributed. Homophobia is the anti-Semitism of our decade. Whatever one's moral stance on the specifics of homosexual activity, genuine and informed Christian concern should center immediately upon the maximum reduction of social psychic pain (the result of insensitivity and inadvertence on the part of the great majority) to a long oppressed minority. It is only when the homosexual can feel unthreatened and free to seek his/her identity that the more undesirable features of the gay scene are likely to disappear. Much of the gay's promiscuity, for example, stems from his poor self-image, which is obviously the reflection of the unfavorable attitudes of heterosexual society. So very much of what

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goes on currently in the gay world can most readily be understood once we put it in the intelligible context of what is involved in belonging to a very unpopular minority. The beginning of the solution to the "homosexual" problem is to seriously consider giving them the same full legal rights and the same social acceptance we have found it morally imperative, in keeping with our democratic tradition, to accord to other minorities. Anything less than this is to perpetuate an ancient and intolerable prejudice which not only does crippling harm to the homosexual but deprives the heterosexual society of the contribution of its second largest minority group.

(REV.) HERBERT W. ROGERS, S.J.
Fordham University

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: I must admit, I am momentarily stunned after reading Tom P. Driver's article and Father Fink's article on homosexuality in the April 6 issue of *Commonweal*, and I am having difficulty expressing my reactions.

As a Catholic woman, now divorced, I find it absolutely appalling that these spokesmen would countenance homosexuality.

When I think of my Catholic upbringing in which I was taught that heterosexual sex was for procreation, not pleasure (even in marriage), that sexual thoughts and behavior was lustful and a mortal sin, that we couldn't date divorced or separated men, much less having a loving, sexual relationship with them, I am lost for words!

I have discussed this subject of sex with countless married Catholic women, and the guilt feelings these teachings have engendered in our women is horrifying to contemplate. Our feelings of guilt toward sex is so deep and ingrained, that we can't even enjoy sex in marriage, and must seek help on the psychiatrist's couch, in the hope of saving our marriages. Many of us don't succeed, I didn't!

If *heterosexual* love outside of marriage is considered immoral and a mortal sin—how can these writers speak of the value of love unions between two persons of the *same* sex? Such an about-face is devastating! Have these men any idea of the destructive forces we, as women, have had to contend with in the teachings of the Church regarding sex? Forces which prevent us from having a free, warm, giving relationship with the *opposite* sex?

Do you suppose your writers and the Church would exert this effort and guidance for Catholic women, to help them form healthy, beautiful heterosexual relationships, hopefully culminating in more meaningful and lasting marriages?

(MS) E. MORGAN

BOOKS

Poetry and the mystery of being

Collected Poems, 1950-1970
DONALD DAVIE
Oxford University Press, $12.50

Nothing But Light
ROBERT PACK
Rutgers University Press, $5

CLAIRE HAHN

In an age of cultural fragmentation it has become the business of the poet to construct his sensibility in response to the particular, fractured shards of totality which impinge upon his consciousness. He may then, with Donald Davie, wish that the poems growing from that imaginative vision of a part move out to "humanize the globe." Or, with Robert Pack, his poems may be a record of his discovery of the human need to survive and love in the humiliations of the common. Both Davie and Pack have eschewed that other modern way of confronting fragmentation: myth. The monolithic myths of Graves and Muir, the elaborate system of Yeats, imposed order on the chaos of the contemporary. Davie and Pack wait quietly in the labyrinth of their own beings, counting their pulsebeats, certain that the thread which connects them with all others can be discovered in the given-ness of existence.

Both poets are masters of the middle style and share with Wordsworth the conviction that the creative imagination intuits through its intense awareness permanent values, "primary laws of nature," in the situations of common life. But if affinities with Wordsworth resonate through their poetry, Davie and Pack are closer philosophically to Hegel and the existentialists in their sense that knowledge of self is knowledge of reality: Being pours in. Sartre knows it as the enemy imposing itself. Davie and Pack, with Hegel, welcome it. Man must constantly be brought back to being by poetry, for poetry guards the mystery of being. But here the similarities of the two poets cease. The ground of Donald Davie's sensibility is English; Pack is American and their voices are distinctive.

Donald Davie's *Collected Poems* is the record of twenty years of published writing. He offers it in the "faith that there are still distinctively English—rather than Anglo-American or international—ways of responding imaginatively to the terms of life in the twentieth century." As Donald Davie is probably the master craftsman of contemporary English poetry, the publish-

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ing of this book is an important event.

Davie's concern in his poetry is constant. He cares for form, "the chiselled shape," a sculptor's art but one so subtle that, as he says in an early poem, "Twilight on the Waste Lands" it is

So fugitive, the doubtful sight
Suspects no hand of man at all,
An artefact so natural
It seems the work of air and light.

Throughout his career, as this book evidences, Davie's poetry has been an attempt to demonstrate what he claims in the notes to one of his recent poems, "Six Epistles to Eva Hesse," " . . . as much variety of time, space and action can be encompassed in one of the traditional forms of English verse as in the much vaunted 'free form' of an American tradition originating in Pound's *Cantos*."

This is a large claim but Davie has won the right to state it quietly. His poems are lovely shapes; they are whole, satisfying and often exquisitely beautiful in detail as well as in total form. In "Cold Spring in Essex" he writes:

But I am happy this morning,
Looking into my garden, seeing the cold light standing
Oblique to the grey-green tree-trunks and the grasses,
All over my illimitable future.

But Davie does not care solely for technical form. He weds meter and metaphor to create a moral shape. He shrinks in revulsion from the crippling hatreds of "Belfast on a Sunday Afternoon," meditates on the landscapes of the New World, broods over Wordsworth's Hawkshead from the perspective of Dachau. He is a moralist observing the extremes of the modern world. Often his poems are a deliberate pastiche of the voices and images of poets considered the spokesmen of the age. Reading these poems chronologically, one has the sense of discovering the era from 1950 to 1970 anew through the eyes of a cultivated, self-consciously English sensibility.

He sheds lovely Wordsworthian light on the small things of everyday; looks sternly, ironically at a large world grown cold. His penetrating glance is turned always on humanity, "fallen though redeemable." Perhaps a quote from "To a Brother in the Mystery" comes close to defining the quality of Davie's poetry. It has a "fine drawn/ Severity that is tenderness."

Donald Davie's poetry is illuminated by cold clear light. Robert Pack's poetry is *Nothing but Light* and it is warm and full of little loves, small, beautiful lives. I respected the poetry of Donald Davie and was aware that I was in the presence of a major talent in contemporary poetry. I *like* Robert Pack and can't quite analyze how he creates the sense of light and love that irradiates his verse.

Nothing but Light is a small volume of poetry and does not contain the record of a life but it is an important work. Pack's voice is as moderate and contained as that of Davie and he cares as much about the construction of each poem. A craftsman is at work. But Pack turns the heat, irony, bitterness, love of his being into the carefully molded poem. The result is that for all its tensile strength, his voice is warm. Pack is not a moralist nor is he so concerned with the larger world as is Davie. Pack's poetry is written from the matrix of his experience of pain and joy in the family.

I have read few modern poems as moving as "Prayer to My Father While Putting My Son to Bed." It is Pack's care for the exact metaphor, the precise rhythm that preserves the poem from sentimentality:

It is good, what I feel is good, I feel it has always been good.
I hold to it as you held to it. If only my voice, this poem,
This prayer, could hold you back in life, and protect my child
When another and another morning comes.

This is quiet poetry, much concerned with death and change, but suffusing the present with shafts of sunlight.

REVIEWERS

CLAIRE HAHN is an assistant professor of English at Fordham University.

JORDAN BISHOP, who worked for many years in Latin America, is the author of *Cristianismo radical y marxismo* (Mexico, 1970), and an associate editor of the *Cape Breton Post* in Nova Scotia.

WILLIAM M. CURTIN is an associate professor in the English Department Department at the University of Connecticut.

Theory of Liberation

GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ

Orbis, $7.95

JORDAN BISHOP

It might be said that theology has come of age in Latin America with Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation*. Other theologians have made important contributions; Gustavo Gutiérrez has read them, and in a world where the easy theological essay is predominant, has contributed a careful and serious work of scholarship.

For a long time theology in Latin America was dominated by Europe, first of all by Rome and the Roman faculties of theology, then, as the Council began to appear on the horizon, by France and Germany. The cultural dependency that has characterized the history of Latin America in other areas was repeated in the Church. The reaction of many, as the Church awakened in Latin America, was a reaction of activism. Much of what had been presented to them as theology was irrelevant to their situation, and in spite of Aquinas' affirmation that theology is a practical as well as a speculative discipline, it often had very little to do with the praxis of Latin American Christians.

Nevertheless, the author has not been seduced by the mad pursuit of relevance. Nor does he neglect the work of European scholars. He is very much in touch with the greater theological tradition as well as with contemporary European thinkers, from Chenu and de Lubac and Bultmann to Schillebeeckx, Moltmann and Blanquart. In his search for a Latin American theology he does not turn his back on Europe. But neither is he intimidated by Europe, and he has a good critical sense for concerns that relate principally to European historical contingencies

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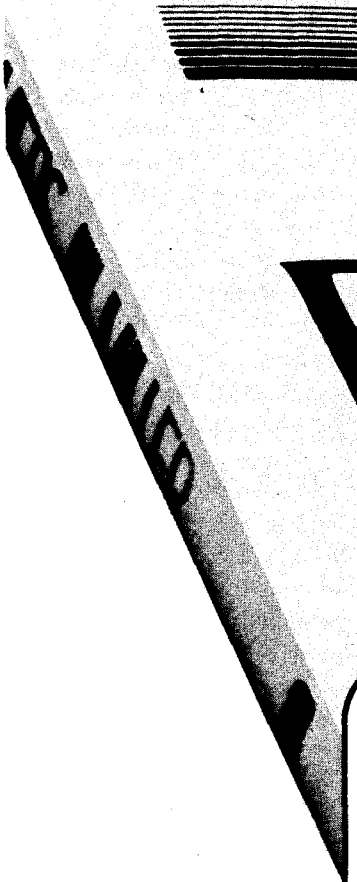
Only the author of
'The Taste of New Wine'
could write this book

KEITH MILLER

THE BECOMERS



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rather than to the world of Latin America.

In a sense, this book defies description. Like Hegel, Gutiérrez must be read, and carefully; he is not afraid of making fine distinctions when these must be made. One by one, he takes a hard look at most of the themes under discussion in Latin America in the last forty or fifty years: the dualism of Church and world, of priest and layman, the attempts to assign a distinct place to each, old discussions of grace and nature and supernature that cannot be avoided even when one is vitally concerned with the praxis of Christianity, salvation, eschatology and the Kingdom. These are traditional problems, and to handle them adequately demands subtlety and depth.

Interlaced with these are questions that many traditional theologies avoided, or relegated to "another plane": the secular questions. The temptation, in a world we presume to have come of age, is to avoid confusion by leaving them out of theological discourse. This practice has been made easy by the individualism that is now traditional in Western theology. Like the documents of Medellín, the author acknowledges "the solidarity of the Church with the Latin American reality. The Church avoids placing itself above this reality, but rather attempts to assume its responsibility for the injustice which it has supported both by its links with the established order as well as by its silence regarding the evils this order implies."

In face of one of the hard questions in Latin America today, whether the Church should throw its weight behind movements for social change, Gutiérrez handles himself well. The Church's denunciation of injustice "must be public, for its position in Latin American society is public." "In Latin America this denunciation must represent a radical critique of the present order, which means that the Church must also criticize itself as an integral part of this order." Religion, in spite of the popular French dualism (itself perhaps a necessary antidote to the Constantinian establishment) and in spite of liberal missionaries from North America, has never succeeded in becoming a private affair.

This does not mean that he would tie the Church to a revolutionary ideology, a risk that he is well aware of. To the outsider, it might look that way, since with a growing number of Latin Americans he sees no alternative to a revolution and no possibility of compromise with imperialistic capitalism. But his utopian vision of the place of the Church in all this is too subtle to be painted with the brush of an ideology.

Gutiérrez also refuses to evade the problem posed by the class struggle as this is formulated in the Marxian tradition: "The class struggle is a fact and neutrality in this question is not possible. These two observations delimit the indicated problems, prevent us from getting lost in facile solutions, and provide a concrete context for our search. More exactly, the questions raised with regard to the universal character of love and the unity of the Church are real questions precisely because the class struggle confronts us as a fact and because it is impossible *not to take part in it.*"

The scholarly language is deceptive. We are used to inflammatory rhetoric from real or supposed revolutionists. Gutiérrez is a radical who speaks as a scholar. His scholarship is sound and in spite of the traditional duties of reviewers I find it hard to fault him. Some contentions do bear looking at critically, as for example the following: "The social praxis of contemporary man has begun to reach maturity . . . it is the behavior of man ever more conscious of being an active subject of history; he is more articulate in the face of social injustice and of all repressive forces which stand in the way of his fulfillment; he is ever more determined to participate both in the transformation of social structures and in effective political action." Nor would I agree that before the great social revolutions—especially the French and the Russian ones—"the great majority of people did not participate in political decisions or did so only sporadically and formally." In many pre-revolutionary societies there was a real, if subtle, political participation, and some of our own are increasingly elitist in fact.

This book must be read, not once but several times, by those who are interested in doing theology today. Reading the blurbs supplied by the publisher, I was suspicious. It couldn't be *that* good. But it is. And the translation is first-class.

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Water with Berries

GEORGE LAMMING

Holt, Rinehart, $6.95

WILLIAM M. CURTIN

Water with Berries is the second novel by George Lamming to appear this year. Together with *Natives of My Person*, published in February, this novel caps a tremendous burst of power. After twelve years of silence, Lamming has given us two novels that

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reestablish his talent as among the most important of West Indian Writers. His career had an auspicious beginning with *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953), the lyrical evocation of youth growing into cultural and political consciousness, which has remained his most frequently reprinted work. His reputation was enhanced by two novels during the fifties and crowned in 1960 by two books. One, *The Pleasure of Exile,* a critical study of the myth of colonialism as embodied in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and of its consequences for West Indian writers, was a kind of manifesto, and a personal program for his future. Later that year in *A Season of Adventure* he used the Haitian "Ceremony of Souls," a ritual of reconciliation with the dead and the past described in the earlier book, as a basis for his story as an example of native sources of power to oppose the colonial myth. The program, promise, and performance of twelve years ago have been redeemed this year with these two intriguing novels. The most recent, *Water with Berries,* suggests that Lamming's mind and imagination have the maturity and talent to create an island world that may be the most significant feat among the numerous accomplishments of West Indian novelists.

In *Natives of My Person* Lamming tells a story that demonstrates the effects of colonialism on the original imperialists, the great explorers of the age of discovery. The influence of Melville gives the novel its form—a narrative mixed with travel accounts, legends, histories, and ship logs, they provide a veritable "cetology" of imperialist psychology, that curious mixture of idealism and inferiority that marked the adventurer of the renaissance. This inferiority is basic to the crew as well as the Commandant of the *Reconnaissance*—the Surgeon, the Steward, the Priest, the Boatswain, etc. Each character is identified with his craft, not only because Lamming writes allegorically, mythically, but because technique and skill are the means by which the imperialist tries to build his confidence, overcome his inferiority. In a colonial situation, Lamming tells us, the racial and sexual realities of master and slave lead to conquests that at once assuage and intensify the inferiority of the masters.

In *Water with Berries,* Lamming investigates the effects of colonialism on three "natives," artists washed ashore in England by the tide of West Indian migration he had described earlier in *The Emigrants* (1954). Part of the force of this book is that Lamming uses *The Tempest* as a source for his title and his inventive plot. The title is taken from Caliban's description of Prospero's imperialist method: "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother/ Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first/Thou strok'st me, and made much of me; wouldst give me/Water with berries in't. . . ." The mechanism that sets the novel in motion is suggested in Lamming's comment in *The Pleasures of Exile,* where he claims that Prospero's subsequent mistreatment of Caliban is inscrutable in terms of the play. "But we could not speak with authority on the possibilities of this defect until we had heard from Sycorax and Miranda's mother. Both are dead; and so our knowledge must be postponed until some arrangements comparable to the Haitian Ceremony of Souls returns them to tell us what we should and ought to know." Lamming uses the Ceremony of Souls to create a powerful and mysterious scene with the modern Miranda, but the novel as a whole is a study of the psychology of colonialism in the relation between the sons of Caliban and Prospero's "resurrected" wife, the Old Dowager, Mrs. Gore-Brittain.

Though *Water with Berries* begins slowly, for characteristically Lamming's novels open with a quiet pace, it builds to a set of terrific climaxes. He makes an examination of the subtle and persuasive influence of colonialism on

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the mundane lives of the three artists. The fate of two, a composer and an actor, are pathetic. Driven by the sense of dependence that colonialism has emphasized in them and by the frustrations of their talents in London, they feel a terrifying neglect, and they finally react with a violence (arson and rape) that horrifies Londoners. These two serve as contrast to the main characters, Teenton, painter turned revolutionary, whose violence against the Old Dowager demonstrates his triumph over psychological colonialism. Lamming's rhetorical problem is to gain sympathy for Teenton so that his readers, typically British and American, will be willing to accept Teenton's calculated "ingratitude" toward the generous condescensions of the resurrected Mrs. Prospero, his refusal to be a "pet nigger," his assertion as a man that what may look like a personal, even sexual violence, is in fact an act of human and therefore political independence. In *Water with Berries* Lamming convinces the reader that the generosity of the Prosperos is a trap and that the violence of the Calibans is necessary revolution.

With this achievement behind him, it is obvious that Lamming can use the Ceremony of Souls as a protean principle to investigate every possibility of history and politics and mind that is significant to his imaginary island. The prospect before us is that Lamming's San Cristobal will become the major imaginative statement on the psychology of colonialism.

Embattled Media

BEYOND THE WATERGATE headlines there are increasing indications that the freedom guarantees of the First Amendment, while not in danger of being abrogated, do stand to be substantively tailored for the media, notably in the areas of data accessibility and confidentiality. The trends are depressing. State legislatures continue to back away from even moderate press-shield bills, and just the other day the Supreme Court, with only Justice Douglas dissenting, declined to review yet another reporter's criminal conviction for refusing to provide investigators with details of his reporting. . . .

Congress is in an advantageous position to fortify First Amendment guarantees by legislating positively on the prerogatives of journalists. No less than 40 bills have been introduced in the current Congress to guarantee the rights of reporters. While these rights may not be absolute, they obviously need some explicit reaffirmation in the wake of opinion emanating from the four Nixon appointees to the High Court and from Justice White in the precedent-setting Branzburg and related media cases.

A concomitant in all of this, naturally, is "the American people's need to know," a point being stressed by Davis Taylor of the *Boston Globe*, chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Association. "Our democracy," he adds, "is in serious trouble if a free press is restricted." These are, by now, clichés, but, as Watergate has underscored, far from being irrelevant ones.

—*Commonweal*, May 11, 1973

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Michael Novak (Cont.)

ers? The Left valued the social sciences, and social planning, and these required a stiff dose of "value-free" discourse and administrative "realism." As this emphasis became socially effective, what would happen, eventually, to the humanism of the individual, his freedom and spontaneity, his imagination and creativity?

Intellectually, by conceiving of itself as a merely adversary culture, the Left dug itself into a neck-high pit.

By reaction, in the last few years, much of the intellectual work on the Left has had an almost religious, philosophical, meditative quality. Michael Harrington's *Socialism* makes nourishing soup from the simple nail of Marx's brief writings on humanism. Theodore Roszak turns to mysticism. The Left looks for soul. It can no longer afford a merely adversary position regarding mainstream culture. It needs to assume a creative position. It needs to undertake the task Camus long ago defined: "All of us, among the ruins, are preparing a renaissance beyond the limits of nihilism."

If the New Left sometimes seemed nihilistic, it must be remembered that nothingness is a starting place, beyond which a moral renaissance must be constructed. "The revolution," Péguy said, "is moral or not at all."

For a time, the American Left did far too little to imagine a moral revolution, suited to every element of our

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population. It enjoyed the simplicities of the adversary role: criticizing knocking, condemning. That time is past.

There are enough progressive votes in America today to bring the Left back to power. We start again, as we did near the end of the Fifties, with Nixon as a symbolic opponent, and with the somnolence and weariness of the Eisenhower years as a dominant pattern. But we have a much better sense than we did then of the privileges of class, income and style available to the college-educated, and of the social-economic needs of working people, white and black. We are much less likely to impose a merely intellectual style upon the Left.

The amorality and greedy paranoia of the White House staff have devastated Nixon's moral prestige. Because of failures on the Left, many voters in 1972 moved, without joy, to Nixon. Given an intelligent program, Nixon might have solidified his majority, for it had lost faith both in the policies and in the moral quality of the Left.

What I wrote in these pages in 1968 remains true: "For the distress of poorly educated whites, who are caught between unattainable affluence and the menacing advance of the poor, is undifferentiated. It can be led in any of several directions. As McCarthy himself admitted in Oregon, this forgotten class voted for Kennedy, not McCarthy. Now that Kennedy is dead, there is no intelligent and liberal leader to hold their trust." Thus the Wallace threat.

The first step in building a new Left —I wrote then and hold now—"is to reach and to lead the class from which cops, cab drivers, and millions of others come. This is the major, indispensable task of a new democracy." The Left is far more ready to undertake this task in 1973 than it was in 1968.

But a second task, seemingly more remote, is intimately tied to the accomplishment of the first. We must re-establish the moral credibility of the Left. No one who talks often to workingmen believes the Left now has the credibility it had in 1962 or 1965.

What is our vision of a just society, attractive to pipefitters, machinists, rubber workers, garment workers, drivers of beer trucks; to advertising men and to auto manufacturers; to hog butchers and wheat farmers; to rural sharecroppers and urban welfare recipients? In a nation like ours, moral symbols are extremely powerful. But such symbols must spring from the people themselves; once they feel manipulated by the symbols of others, they turn away in revulsion. (Ho Chi Minh knew this, as John McAllister has shown.)

For ordinary people morality, symbolically, is not discrete but whole. Those journalists who can scarcely disguise their pleasure at the "sophistication" and "liberation" of suburban neighborhoods where pornographic films now enjoy astonishing success, often fail to see that the same people also feel "liberated" from naive trust in politicians, and "sophisticated" about immorality in politics.

It is a fond belief of the Left that sexual liberation will lead to a more liberated and humane political order. That belief may well be an illusion. Symbolically, the "lowering" of standards in one area may (for many) provoke cynicism in the other. A highly disciplined and personalistic class may be able to place sexual liberation in a personal, moral context. For the millions of denizens of massage parlors, wife-swappings, houses of prostitution, and porno films, it may be doubted that exploitation has been dealt a devastating blow.

Morality is a fragile public symbol. Insistence on the superiority of one's own morality is—for Right or for Left —certain to fracture it.

The immediate task of writers and thinkers on the Left is to enunciate what they take to be a moral way of life, in symbols grounded in the experience and daily lives of the diverse peoples of the United States. Failing such a moral vision, no long-term political movement can be expected. Granted such a moral vision, there are millions caught in a malaise they hate, eager to feel part of something worth living for, who will follow ardently.

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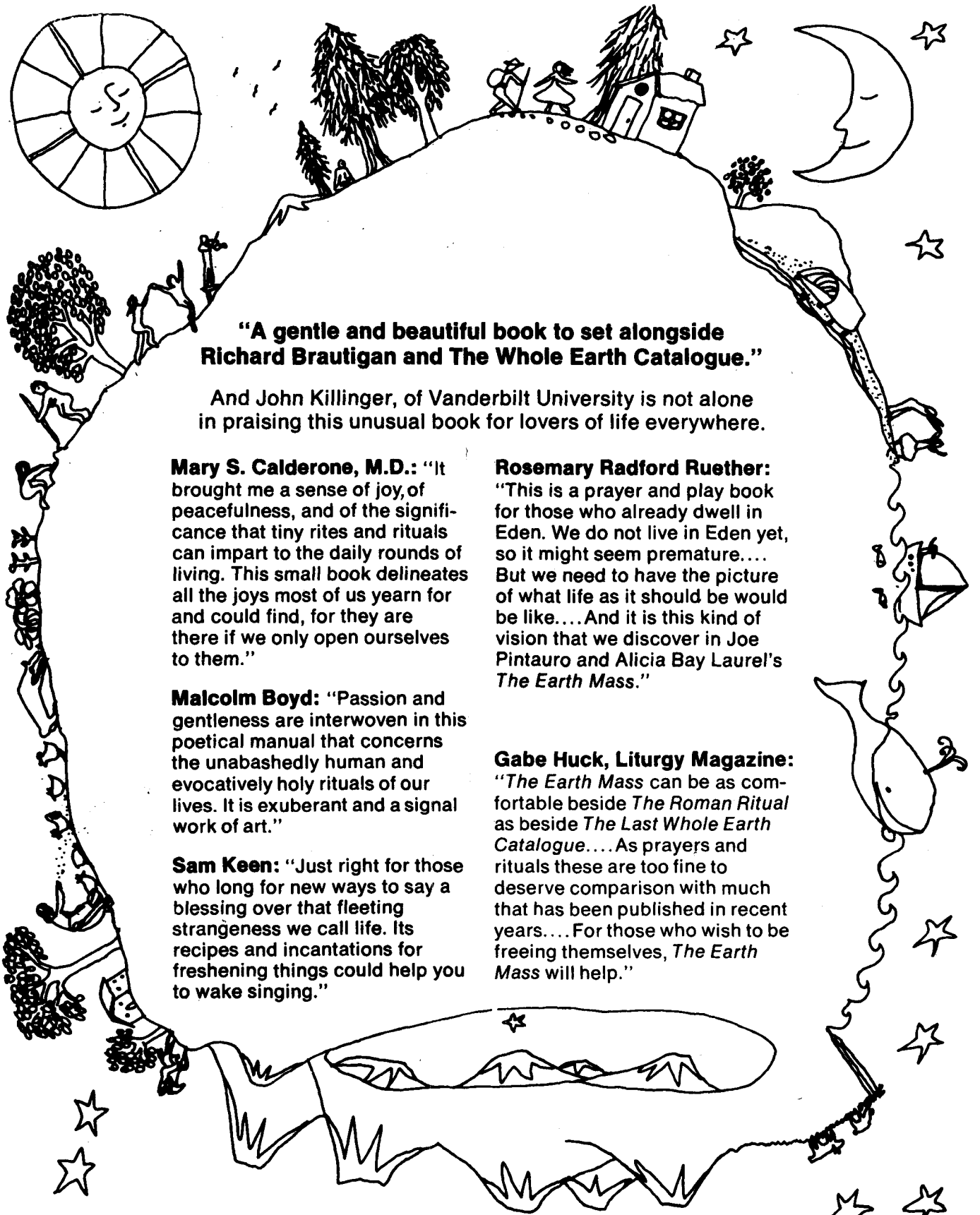

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